

IN THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (previously presented) A body-on-frame apparatus for a vehicle, the body-on-frame apparatus comprising:

a vehicle frame adapted for receiving a vehicle body ; and

a vehicle body mounted on the frame in a spaced relationship thereto, and including a localized area that is downwardly deflectable when an operating load is applied to the localized area of the body;

the localized area of the body forming a localized substantially vertical gap between the frame and the localized area of the body, when the body is mounted on the frame in a spaced relationship thereto, that closes and allows the localized area of the body to contact the vehicle frame for resisting further localized deflection of the localized area of the body when the operating load is applied to the localized area of the body.

2. (previously presented) The body-on-frame apparatus of claim 1, wherein the localized area of the body contacts the frame, when the localized load is sufficient to overcome the gap.

3. (original) The body-on-frame apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a load bearing structure operatively attached to the localized area of the body for applying the operating load to the localized area.

4. (currently amended) A body-on-frame apparatus for a vehicle, the body-on-frame apparatus comprising:

a vehicle frame adapted for receiving a vehicle body;

a vehicle body mounted on the frame in a spaced relationship thereto and including a localized area that is downwardly deflectable when an operating load is

applied to the localized area of the body; and

a load bearing structure operatively attached to the localized area of the body for applying the operating load to the localized area;

the localized area of the body forming a localized substantially vertical gap between the frame and the localized area of the body, when the body is mounted on the frame in a spaced relationship thereto, that closes and allows the localized area of the body to contact the vehicle frame for resisting further localized deflection of the localized area of the body when the operating load is applied to the localized area of the body; and

~~The body-on-frame apparatus of claim 3,~~ wherein the load bearing structure includes a passenger seating structure, and the operating load is applied to the seating structure.

5. (original) The body-on-frame apparatus of claim 4, wherein the seating structure includes anchorages for a child restraint apparatus, and the operating load is applied to the seating structure by a load applying structure attached to the anchorages for the child restraint apparatus.

6. (original) The body-on-frame apparatus of claim 3, wherein:
the frame includes an upper surface thereof adapted for contact by the localized area of the body; and the body includes a lower surface thereof defining the localized area of the body.

7. (currently amended) A body-on-frame apparatus for a vehicle, the body-on-frame apparatus comprising:

a vehicle frame adapted for receiving a vehicle body;

a vehicle body mounted on the frame in a spaced relationship thereto and including a localized area that is downwardly deflectable when an operating load is applied to the localized area of the body; and

a load bearing structure operatively attached to the localized area of the body for applying the operating load to the localized area;

the localized area of the body forming a localized substantially vertical

gap between the frame and the localized area of the body, when the body is mounted on the frame in a spaced relationship thereto, that closes and allows the localized area of the body to contact the vehicle frame for resisting further localized deflection of the localized area of the body when the operating load is applied to the localized area of the body; and wherein the frame includes an upper surface thereof adapted for contact by the localized area of the body, the body includes a lower surface thereof defining the localized area of the body, and

~~The body-on-frame apparatus of claim 6,~~ wherein the body includes a crossmember defining the lower surface and localized area of the body.

8. (original) The body-on-frame apparatus of claim 7, wherein the load bearing structure includes a passenger seating structure, and the operating load is applied to the seating structure.

9. (original) The body-on-frame apparatus of claim 8, wherein the seating structure includes anchorages for a child restraint apparatus, and the operating load is applied to the seating structure by a load applying structure attached to the anchorages for the child restraint apparatus.

10. (previously presented) A vehicle body apparatus adapted for attachment to a vehicle frame in a spaced relationship thereto, the vehicle body apparatus comprising:

a vehicle body including a localized area that is substantially vertically deflectable by an operating load applied to the localized area when the

body is attached to the frame in a spaced relationship thereto;

the localized area of the body forming a localized substantially vertical gap between the frame and the localized area of the body, when the body is mounted on the frame in a spaced relationship thereto, that closes and allows the localized area of the body to contact the frame for resisting further localized downward deflection of the localized area of the body when the operating load is applied to the localized area of the

body.

11. (canceled)

12. (original) The vehicle body apparatus of claim 10, further comprising a load bearing structure operatively attached to the localized area of the body for applying the operating load to the localized area.

13. (currently amended) A vehicle body apparatus adapted for attachment to a vehicle frame in a spaced relationship thereto, the vehicle body apparatus comprising:

a vehicle body including a localized area that is substantially vertically deflectable by operating load applied to the localized area when the body is attached to the frame in a spaced relationship thereto; and

a load bearing structure operatively attached to the localized area of the body for applying the operating load to the localized area;

the localized area of the body forming a localized substantially vertical gap between the frame and the localized area of the body, when the body is mounted on the frame in a spaced relationship thereto, that closes and allows the localized area of the body to contact the frame for resisting further localized downward deflection of the localized area of the body when the operating load is applied to the localized area of the body; and

~~The vehicle body apparatus of Claim 12,~~ wherein the load bearing structure includes a passenger seating structure, and the operating load is applied to the seating structure.

14. (original) The vehicle body apparatus of claim 13, wherein the seating structure includes anchorages for a child restraint apparatus, and the operating load is applied to the seating structure by a load applying structure attached to the anchorages for the child restraint apparatus.

15. (original) The vehicle body apparatus of claim 12, wherein:

the frame includes an upper surface thereof adapted for contact by the localized area of the body; and the body includes a lower surface thereof defining the localized area of the body.

16. (currently amended) A vehicle body apparatus adapted for attachment to a vehicle frame in a spaced relationship thereto, the vehicle body apparatus comprising:

a vehicle body including a localized area that is substantially vertically deflectable by an operating load applied to the localized area when the body is attached to the frame in a spaced relationship thereto; and

a load bearing structure operatively attached to the localized area of the body for applying the operating load to the localized area;

the localized area of the body forming a localized substantially vertical gap between the frame and the localized area of the body, when the body is mounted on the frame in a spaced relationship thereto, that closes and allows the localized area of the body to contact the frame for resisting further localized downward deflection of the localized area of the body when the operating load is applied to the localized are of the body;

wherein the frame includes an upper surface thereof adapted for contact by the localized area of the body and the body includes a lower surface thereof defining the localized area of the body; and

~~The vehicle body apparatus of claim 15,~~ wherein the body includes a crossmember defining the lower surface and localized area of the body.

17. (original) The vehicle body apparatus of claim 16, wherein the load bearing structure includes a passenger seating structure, and the operating load is applied to the seating structure.

18. (original) The vehicle body apparatus of claim 17, wherein the seating structure includes anchorages for a child restraint apparatus, and the operating load is

applied to the seating structure by a load applying structure attached to the anchorages for the child restraint apparatus.

19. (previously presented) A method for constructing a body-on-frame vehicle, the method comprising:

fabricating a vehicle body including a localized area that is substantially vertically deflectable by an operating load applied to the localized area, when the body is attached to a frame in a spaced relationship thereto; and

attaching the vehicle body to a frame in such a manner that the localized area of the body forms a localized substantially vertical gap between the frame and the localized area of the body, when the body is mounted on the frame in a spaced relationship thereto, that closes and allows the localized area of the body to contact the frame for resisting further localized downward deflection of the localized area of the body when the operating load is applied to the localized area of the body.

20. (canceled)